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FCC - MAILROOM

Pat Fowler  
277 Stage Rd.  
Killington, VT 05751

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Docket No. 02-277 Don't abandon media safeguards!

Dear FCC Commissioners,

I strongly urge that the FCC abandon its plan to end long-standing and critical safeguards that have served as an important "check and balance" system to help ensure diversity of media ownership. Under the proposal you are considering, one company in a community will be able to own the newspaper, several TV and radio stations, the cable system, and the principal Internet access company. There will be fewer owners of networks, stations, and newspapers nationwide. This will very badly damage true media diversity and competition. A competitive and diverse media is absolutely essential to ensure an informed citizenry and a healthy and vibrant democracy.

Eliminating these last remaining protections of the public trust would constitute a complete abandonment of the FCC's mission to ensure that our airwaves, which are owned by all Americans, are used in a manner which ensures the diverse range of voices and opinions needed in a healthy democracy. Loss of these protections would constitute a huge and unacceptable giveaway of public resources and political power to a few large and powerful media companies.

Further consolidation of the media in the false name of "deregulation" must be halted and in fact reversed. TV and radio news in the hands of a handful of profit-driven corporations has undermined our democracy more than any other modern force except the high cost of broadcast commercials during elections. The media companies have failed in their public trust to provide crucial unbiased information to the public about most public issues. Americans depend upon the media to bring us information that will allow us to make the informed choices necessary for the well-being of our nation and our future.

As an American concerned about our democracy, I urge you to reject the current proposal to abandon the last remaining controls on media consolidation. Instead, I strongly urge you to break up the media conglomerates, to open the spectrum to a wide diversity of organizations and independent journalists, and to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine.

Most sincerely,

Pat Fowler

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